

support of one church's grant application or against another?" Would it? Is that a good idea? What future rules will we apply to these funds? Will the Bishop or the Rabbi come by to lobby for funding? If a church violates the rules or is suspected of fraud, do we really want the government digging into their books?

Our Founding Fathers created the Establishment Clause as an answer to this dilemma. Their answer was no. In a letter written in 1832, James Madison wrote, "it may not be easy, in every possible case, to trace the line of separation between the rights of religion and the civil authority with such distinctness as to avoid collisions and doubts on unessential points. The tendency of a usurpation on one side or the other, or a corrupting coalition or alliance between them, will be best guarded by an entire abstinence of the government from interference in any way whatsoever."

We have recently seen the impact of entangling government and religion in the case of the White House and the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army, a religious charity, has lobbied and been lobbied by the White House to promote this legislation. According to newspaper accounts, the Salvation Army was prepared to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to advance this bill in exchange for the right to discriminate in hiring. The White House now says they've backed off.

But the very right to discriminate in hiring that the Salvation Army wanted is contained in this bill! This bill expands the religious exemption under Title VII to clearly non-religious activities and preempts all other state and local non-discrimination laws. For the first time, public funds will be used to discriminate in employment. Or put another way, Americans can be barred from taxpayer funded employment on the basis of their religion.

Under this bill, a Protestant church could refuse to hire a person who is Jewish to work in their day care or a Muslim soup kitchen could refuse to hire a Catholic to serve meals to the hungry. But not only that, a church could refuse to hire a person who is divorced if divorce is against that church's tenets and teachings, even though the position is involved only in a secular activity.

Expanding a religious institution's ability to discriminate in employment to include secular enterprises is just the start of the discrimination in this bill. The bill also preempts all state and local laws against discrimination. Thus, if a state protects its citizens from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, real or perceived gender, marital status, student status, or other bases the moment federal funds are commingled, religious institutions are allowed to discriminate. We hear a great deal about local control, but this bill eviscerates these state and local non-discrimination laws.

That is why the Gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. FRANK, and I proposed an amendment in the Rules Committee. It is very simple, just one line. "Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this section, nothing in this section shall preempt or supersede State or local civil rights laws." Unfortunately, the Rules Committee refused to make our amendment in order, denying the House the opportunity to have an up or down vote on this critical issue.

The House still has an opportunity to correct this major problem with the bill. The Democratic Substitute maintains non-discrimination protections in current Federal, State and local law. I urge all of my colleagues to support the substitute.

It is very distressing that the proponents of this bill desire to chip away at our civil rights and non-discrimination laws. And it is even more distressing that they are using religion as a cover. Civil rights and religious freedom go hand in hand. Undermine one and you undermine the other. In the Federalist Papers Number 51, James Madison noted this interrelationship: "In a free government, the security for civil rights must be the same as that for religious rights. It consists in the one case in the multiplicity of interests, and in the other in the multiplicity of sects."

Mr. Speaker, it is a mistake for government and religion to become entangled. I urge my colleagues to reaffirm our commitment to the separation of church and state by defeating this misguided legislation.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield the balance of our time to my distinguished leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 2 minutes and 10 seconds.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for some of us to say that we were raised in church, and that we are religious people. We went to Sunday school every Sunday when I was a little girl coming up. We went back to the 11 a.m. service with our parents, and then we went back at 6 o'clock in the evening to BYPU for the young people.

I do not want anybody to think that because we are against this bill, somehow we are not religious, or we do not believe in religion. We certainly do. What we do not believe in is discrimination. We cannot, as public policymakers who understand the Constitution and appreciate it, and understand the struggle of those people who came to this country fleeing religious oppression, sit here and allow something called a faith-based program to reinstitute discrimination. It is wrong, and we cannot stand for that.

Religious organizations in this country participate in this government in many ways. For those people who say we have to have this bill in order to have participation, they are wrong.

Let me just tell the Members, last year Lutheran Services, the largest faith-based organization to receive government aid, received about \$2.7 billion, Jewish organizations received about \$2 billion in government aid, Catholic Charities received \$1.4 billion, and the Salvation Army received \$400 million.

So what are we talking about? They have separate 501(c)3s that they apply under because they separate from the collection plate the money that comes from the government in order to carry out these programs, and that is the way it should be. We should never allow commingling of the government and taxpayers' dollars in the collection plate. It is wrong, it violates separation of church and State, and we should stop it on this floor right now, and not support the so-called faith-based organization initiative.

I would say to my friends and colleagues here today, we have the opportunity to uphold civil rights, to say we are against discrimination, to say we are not going to allow taxpayer dollars to turn people away who are applying for jobs, and most importantly, we are going to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America. I ask for a no vote on the faith-based organization initiative.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), the chairman of the Subcommittee on the Constitution.

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

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Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, as we debate this bill today, I would ask my colleagues not to let partisanship cloud their judgment on this proposal. The purpose of this bill is to help people. This is not some great scheme to funnel tax dollars to religious organizations or to force people to seek social services from religious providers. This bill will provide new hope and new opportunities to thousands of Americans. It will help the homeless, the hungry, and the downtrodden, and it will help those in need.

Over the past several months, the House Subcommittee on the Constitution held several hearings that looked at charitable choice programs and the role that faith-based organizations can play in the delivery of social services. We heard compelling testimony about the work of faith-based organizations that have received Federal funding under current law. It is the current law now.

And we discussed and debated the constitutional issues surrounding this legislative proposal. And at the conclusion of these hearings, two points were very clear. First, the charitable choice provisions of H.R. 7 are completely consistent with the Constitution. And second, faith-based organizations play a vital role in providing social services to the most desperate among us.

I would like to quote from a speech that was made a while back to the Salvation Army: "The men and women who work in faith-based organizations are driven by their spiritual commitment. They have sustained the drug addicted, the mentally ill, the homeless, they have trained them, they have educated them, they have cared for them. Most of all, they have done what government can never do: they have loved them."

Do my colleagues know who said that? Al Gore. Now I do not always agree with Al Gore, but I certainly agree with him in that particular instance.

This is legislation which is very important to the President. I want to thank the chairman, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), for getting us to this point today. We